

Picayune Strand Restoration Project Update

Janet Starnes, Principal Project Manager
Everglades Policy and Coordination Division

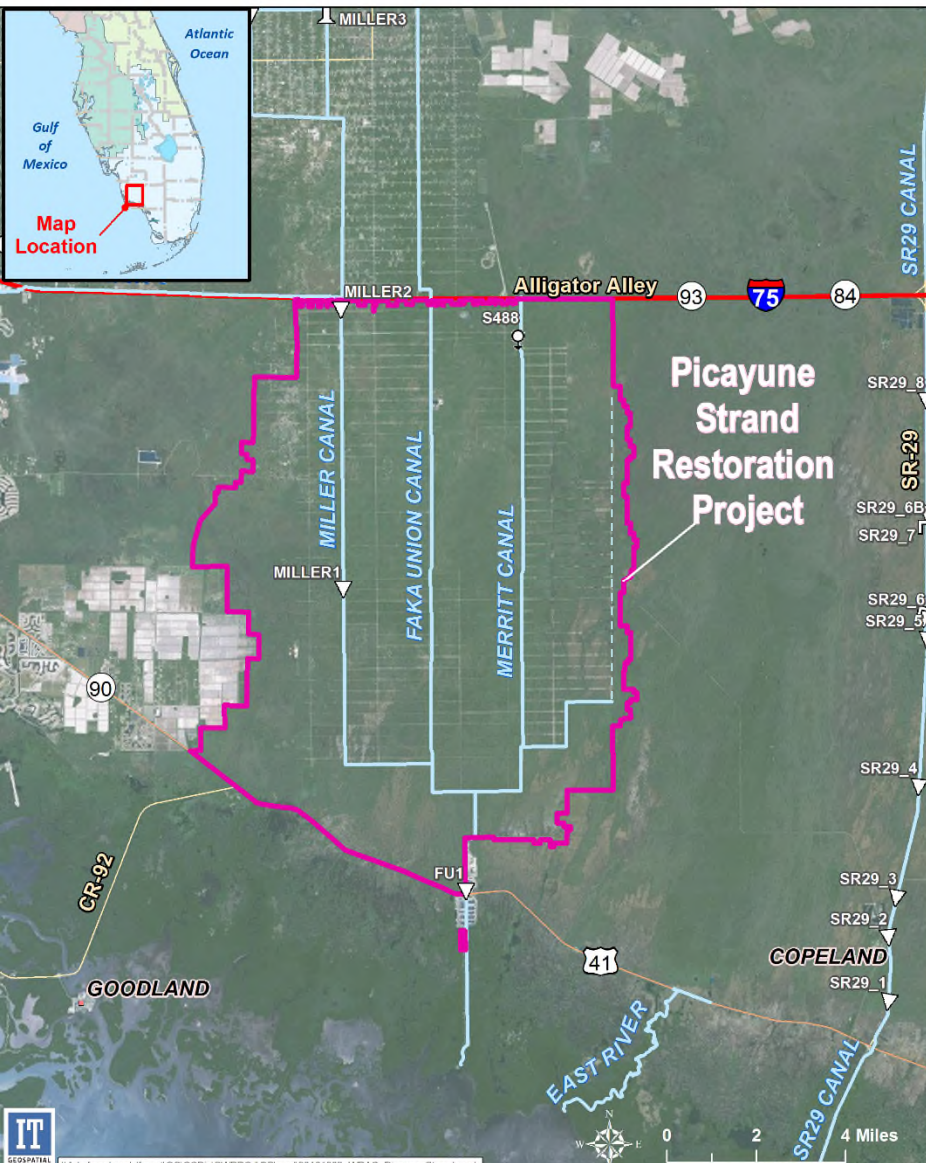
Water Resources Advisory Commission
March 2, 2017

Background

- Golden Gate Estates was originally designed as the largest suburban development in the country
- Golden Gate Estates was created in the 1960s
- Four major canals very effectively drained the area, resulting in an altered ecosystem



Picayune Strand Restoration Project

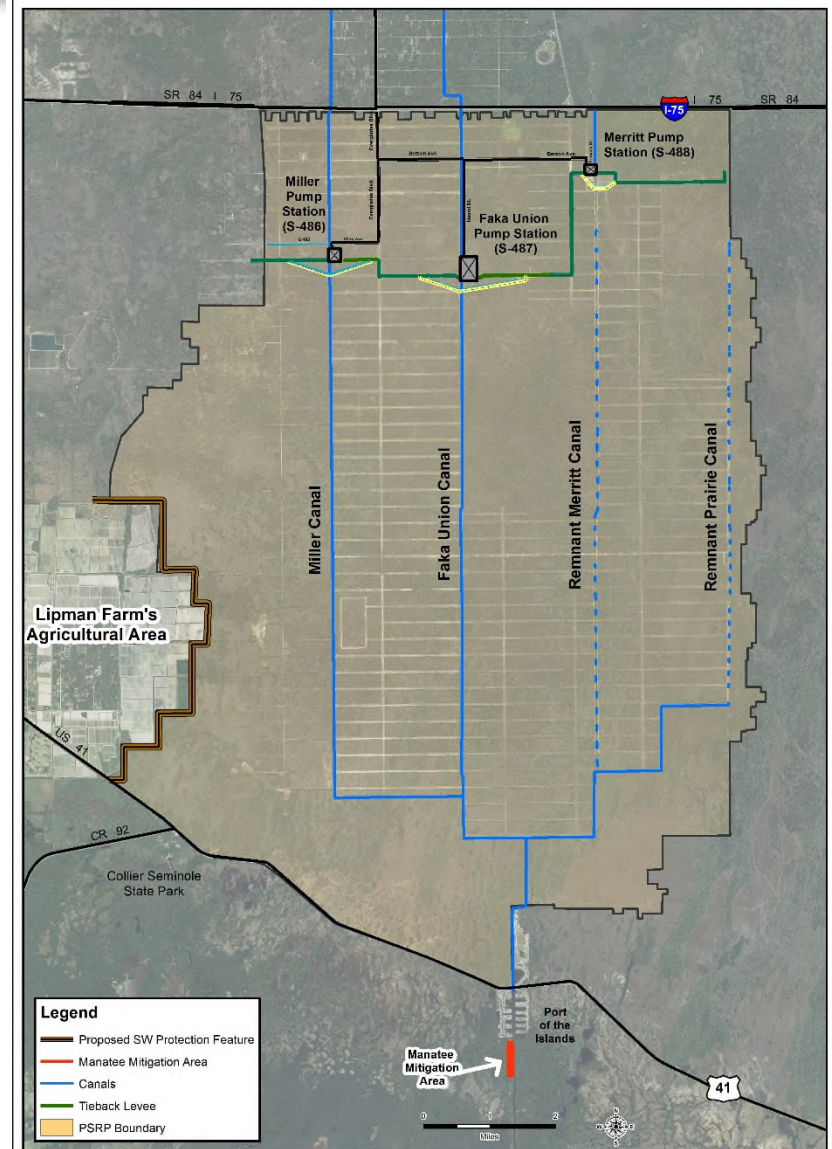


■ Purpose

- Restores pre-drainage watershed flow pattern to a sheet flow condition
- Restores upland/wetland habitat in watershed
- Increases groundwater levels
- Restores habitat for endangered/threatened species (panther, woodstork)
- Restores freshwater flows to estuaries
- Provides for better fire management

Project Features

- Three pump stations
 - Merritt – 810 cfs
 - Faka Union – 2650 cfs
 - Miller – 1250 cfs
- Plugging 42 miles of canals
- Removing 285 miles of roads
- Removing 62 miles of tram roads
- Protection features for adjacent lands
- Manatee mitigation feature



Prairie Canal Restoration



Prairie Canal Plugging, Circa 2004



Prairie Canal, Summer 2008



Southern End of Plugged Prairie Canal, 2016



Prairie Canal, March 2016

Merritt Canal Phase

Merritt Pump Station & Spreader Basin



Merritt Spreader Basin



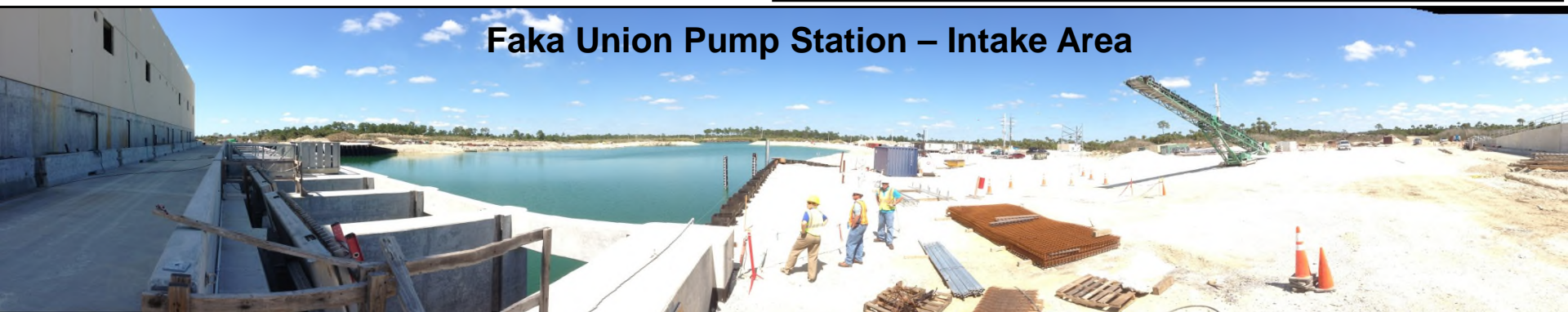
- Construction Complete – September 2014
- Canal Plugging – November 2014 – June 2015
- Operational Testing and Monitoring Period - October 2014 to June 2016
- Transfer to SFWMD - June 2016
- Pump station fully operational

Merritt Canal Phase

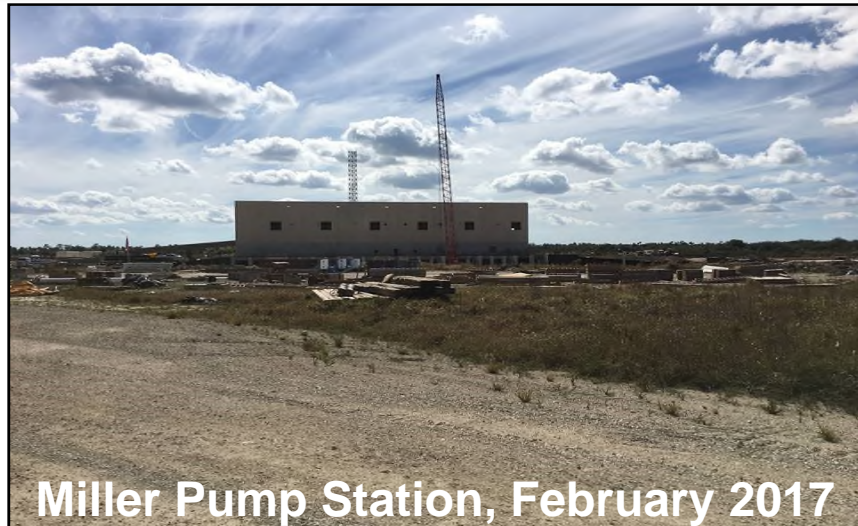


Faka Union Pump Station

- Construction Complete - December 2015
- Operational Testing and Monitoring Period - January 2016 to March 2017
- Transfer to SFWMD – April 2017
- Canal Plugging - March 2020



Miller Pump Station



Miller Pump Station, February 2017

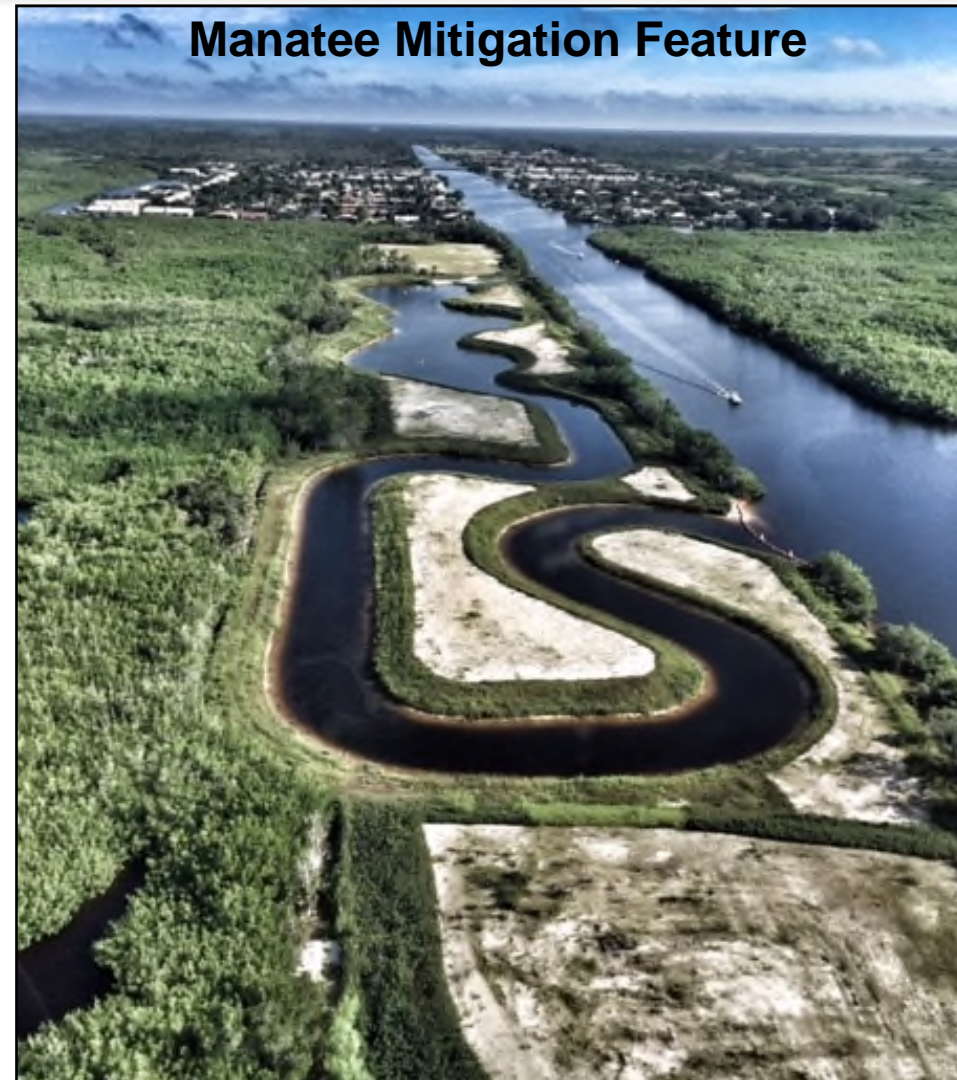


Miller Pump Station, August 2016

- Contract Award (USACE) - September 5, 2013
- Notice to Proceed (USACE) - November 2013
- Construction Complete – Fall 2017
- Operational Testing and Monitoring Period - one-year duration following completion of construction
- Transfer to SFWMD - TBD
- Miller Road Removal – March 2018
- Canal Plugging - March 2020

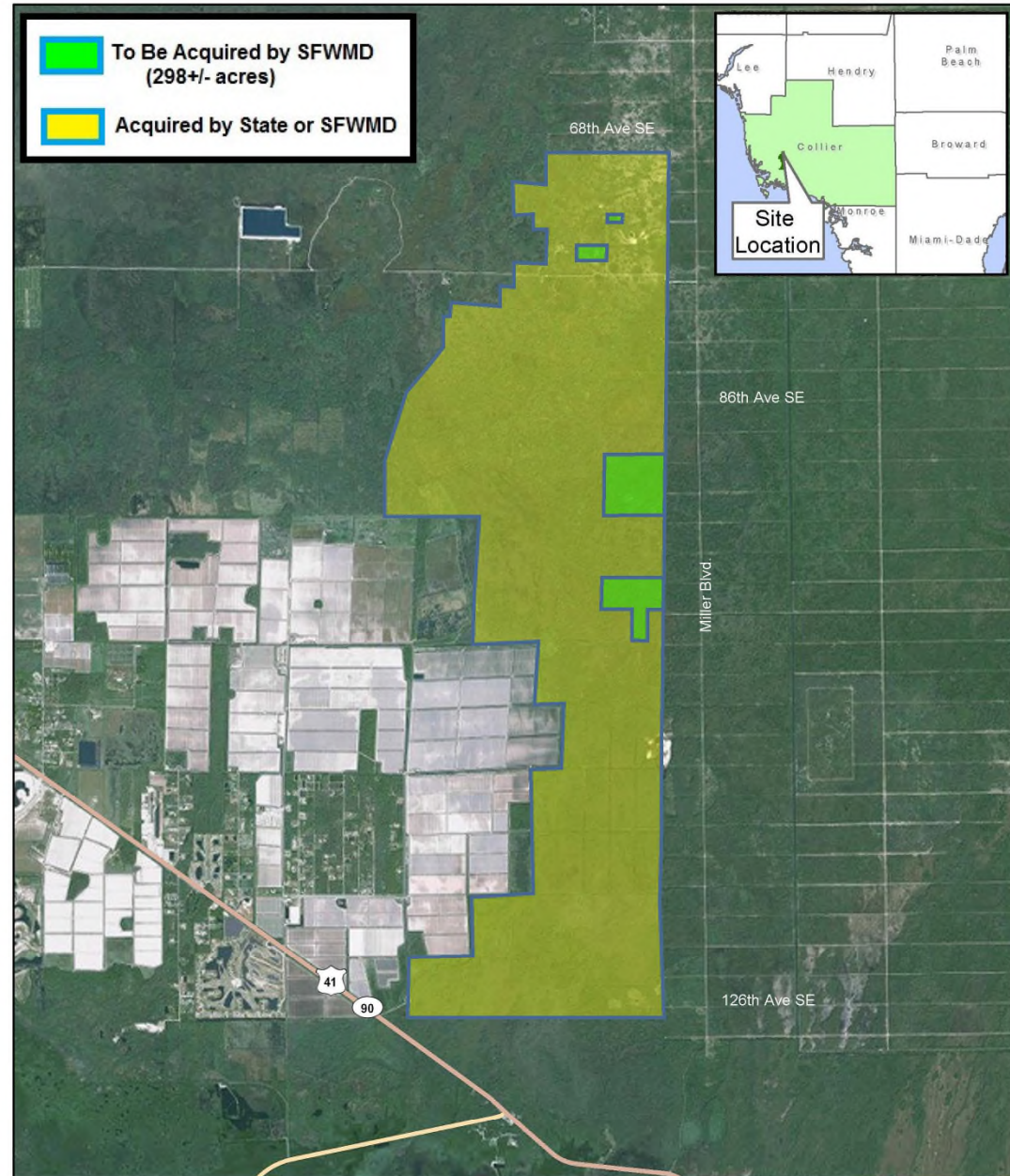
Manatee Mitigation Feature

- South of Port of the Islands on the western bank of Faka Union Canal
- Mitigates for effect on warm water refugium in Port of the Islands
- Construction Start – April 2015
- Construction Complete – April 2016
- Long-term monitoring to determine effectiveness initiated November 2016



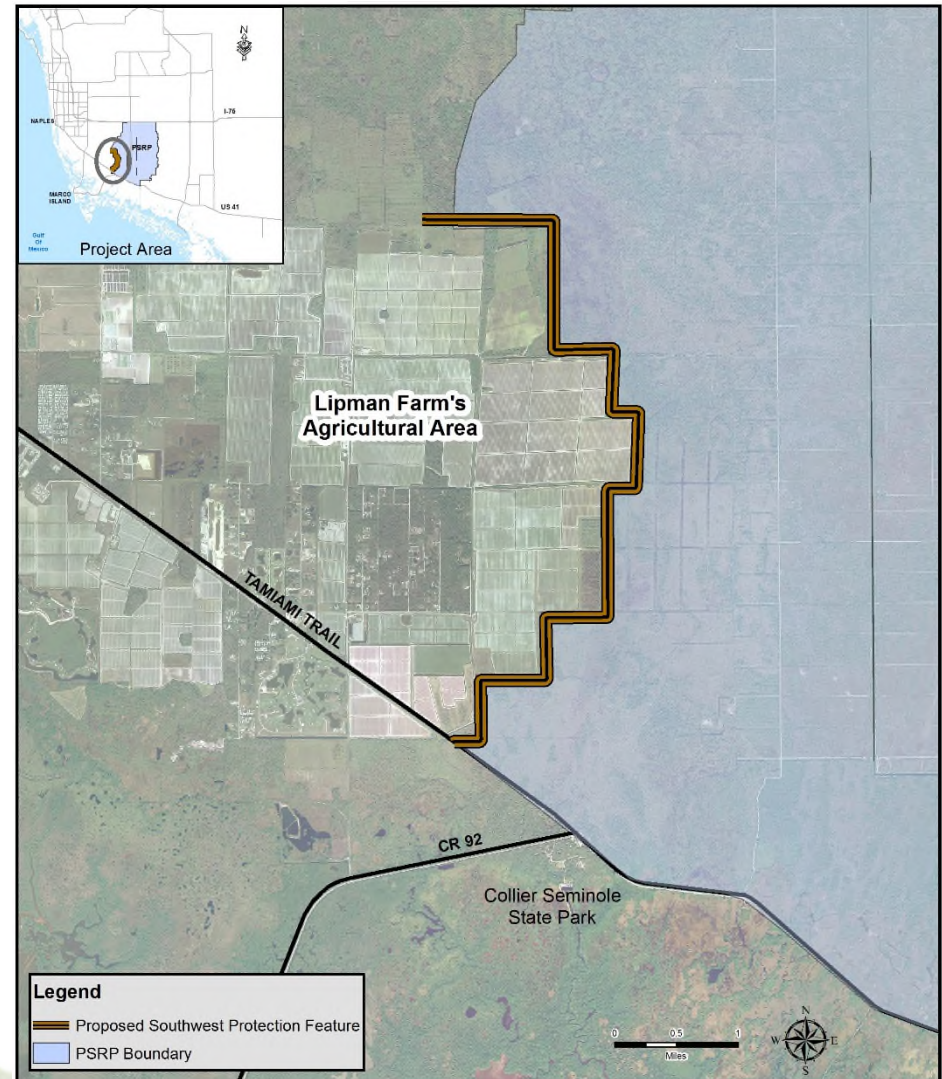
Belle Meade Acquisitions

- 711 acres acquired to date
- 298 acres still to be acquired



Southwestern Protection Feature

- Southwestern corner of project impact area
- Provides flood protection for existing agricultural and residential properties
- Design is underway
- Construction Start – October 2018
- Construction Complete – February 2020



Recreational Opportunities

- Picayune Strand State Forest is open to public access in all areas east of the Faka Union Canal, west of Miller Canal and south of Stewart Boulevard
- Wildlife Management Area with active hunting (per the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission regulations) is open east of Faka Union Canal
- Non-motorized use of the levees is allowed – horseback riding, cycling, walking



Merritt Canal Restored

“...hard to recognize, but there used to be a canal somewhere in the foreground.”

**Merritt Canal Plugged
November 2015**